

Townsend House
5 Court Street
Windsor
Windsor County
Vermont

HABS No. VT-34

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

TOWNSEND HOUSE

Street Address: 5 Court Street, Windsor, Windsor County, Vermont

Present Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Hunnewell, 5 Court Street,
Windsor, Vermont

Present Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. Hunnewell (second floor)
Mr. and Mrs. Cavanaugh (first floor)

Present Use: Residence

Brief Statement of Significance: This very well preserved c. 1835 Carpenter Gothic style house was occupied at one time by an early publisher of the Vermont Journal.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Earliest known owners, two sisters named Townsend (Mary and ?). To McIndoe, the publisher. Through his daughter to Marshall and Clara (nee McIndoe) Perkins. Sold to Julia Walker. Present owners, Mr. and Mrs. (Julia Walker's niece) Hunnewell, purchased the house from the Julia Walker estate.
2. Date of erection: About 1835.
3. Architect: Unknown. Edward Cabot, a Boston architect, lived in Windsor about this time and built his own house, presently owned by Mrs. Frank Cone, on Weston Heights in Windsor, in a similar style. Cabot might possibly have had some influence on the design of this house, as well as on the Unitarian Church on Main Street, Windsor, a small wooden structure with stylistic similarities, dedicated in 1846.
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: Unknown.
5. Notes on alterations and additions: The porch on the south side of the house was added at an early date by McIndoe. The interior, except for plumbing and kitchen modifications and slight alterations to the stairway leading from the second to the third floors, remains essentially unaltered and well preserved. The foundation, brick walls have been reinforced in the cellar with large concrete abutments and the outer north end of the ell has been modified into a garage.

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6. Important old views: Mrs. Ralph Hunnewell, 5 Court Street, Windsor, Vermont, has several early photographs and a very early daguerreotype of the house.
 7. References: Hamilton Child, Gazetteer and Business Directory of Windsor County, Vermont, for 1883-1884, Syracuse, New York, 1884.
Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society, Vermont Historical Society, Montpelier, new series: Vol. IV (1936), p. 159.
Mrs. Ralph Hunnewell, 5 Court Street, Windsor, Vermont.
Miss Katherine Conlin, Town Clerk, Windsor, Vermont.
- B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: McIndoe, during the period he owned the house, published the Vermont Journal in the building and housed the employees of his publishing firm in the upper bedrooms. The Vermont Journal was established in 1783 by Alden Spooner and George Hough in Windsor under the title, The Vermont Journal and the Universal Advertiser. It was the third newspaper established in Vermont and is the oldest still in operation.

Prepared by Osmund R. Overby
November 1959

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: A very well preserved Carpenter Gothic style house.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: One-and-a-half stories, plus cellar and finished attic. The center, front block measures approximately 40' x 40', plus an ell extending to the north.
2. Foundations: Brick with later concrete reinforcing abutments on the interior.
3. Wall construction: Frame construction -- first story covered with clapboards and the two-story gable ends shingled. The shingles are arranged in a varying pattern of rows, the shingles in some of the rows having rectangular ends and those in other rows having semi-hexagonal ends.
4. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: Porch on the south side of the house added at an early date by McIndoe.

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5. Chimneys: Two interior brick chimneys, each with one flue. Just below the roof each chimney splits into two parts and comes through the roof with a blank chimney accompanying the working chimney with flue in a diagonally paired, Gothic chimney motif.

6. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: Front door, hardwood, paneled and lighted with 4" x 4" diagonal lights. Back door. Glass doors to porch on both first and second floors.

b. Windows and shutters: Various windows - rectangular, pointed, clover leaf, some with small pane diagonal lights. Interior shutters on first floor living-room glass doors and windows.

7. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: Gabled roof in cross shape plan with four two-story high gable ends over main block. Steep roof slope. Asphalt shingles.

b. Cornice, eaves: Open eaves with tear drop, open work, sawed wood ornament.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

1. Floor plans: Central hall type with double connecting living rooms to the left, study to the right, dining room directly to the rear, and kitchen in the ell to the right rear leading to shed and garage. Second floor--central hall with bedrooms disposed around. Third floor--three small bedrooms squeezed under the gables. Two families, one on the first floor and one on the second floor, occupy the house so that not all the rooms presently serve their original purpose.

2. Stairways: Straight run stairway in the central hall.

3. Flooring: First floor--patterned hardwood 3" flooring. Second floor--modern hardwood laid over original wide pine boards. Third floor--wide pine board floor.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls--plastered, papered, or painted. Ceilings--plastered.

5. Doorways and doors: Two vertical panel doors throughout interior in either butternut or oak.

6. Trim: Moulded wood trim.

7. Hardware: Brass hardware.

8. Lighting: Electric.

9. Heating: Central. One original fireplace in living room. Cast-iron radiators, elaborately decorated with foliated ornament, with cast-iron shelf-like covers in open grillwork.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The entrance faces east, but the principal facade faces south and is viewed from across the Town Green and the long front lawn.
2. Enclosures: None.
3. Outbuildings: None.
4. Walks, driveways, etc.: Concrete sidewalks.
5. Landscaping, gardens, etc.: Informal--lawn, trees, shrubs, and flowers.

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